



## Decaying Infrastructure— An Achilles' Heel to Readiness for the Guard and Reserve

In 2001, the Association of the United States Army published a Torchbearer National Security Report on infrastructure. While that report focuses primarily on the active Army, the key points made within it are equally applicable to the Army National Guard and Army Reserve.

Simply stated, the Army National Guard and Army Reserve are also plagued by a crumbling infrastructure. Army National Guard Readiness Centers and Army Reserve Centers, equipment maintenance shops, aviation facilities, training sites and ranges have for many years been underfunded for necessary maintenance and construction requirements. At many locations throughout the nation, the funding shortfall has created an Achilles' heel—a capabilities gap—in their ability to meet the new and continuing requirements of homeland defense and the war on terrorism.

For the reserve components, facilities are the heart and soul of their operations. They are much more than just the site where the soldiers report for their drill. They serve both the unit and community as:

- the crucial link between the American citizen population and the Army. Located within a few miles of every citizen, their quality serves as a projection of our military to the civilian populace.
- the center of recruiting and induction for the Army National Guard and Army Reserve—the connecting link to all the youth in the communities.
- the site of the critical monthly training that maintains the soldiers' readiness skills. It is here that the new

technologies are introduced, new security and antiterrorism force protection issues trained, and emergency responses planned, commanded and controlled.

- the site that provides for the well-being/quality of life for reserve component soldiers and the facilities support necessary to provide for the needs of the families when soldiers are deployed.
- the infrastructure to support the maintenance and repair of the sophisticated weapon systems, vehicles and related equipment.

The existing inventory of assets in support of the Army National and Army Reserve is vast. (See figure below.) The Army National Guard alone is the equivalent of eight Fort Hoods. The Army Reserve inventory equates to more square footage than Forts Hood, Sill and Belvoir combined. With such a large inventory, and considering a Department of Defense (DoD) policy to replace every 67 years, it is easy to appreciate that the annual cost for continuing maintenance and replacement is high. The cost is further expanded by new requirements caused by force structure changes and Transformation.

Unfortunately, the history of the Army National Guard is one of drastic underfunding of the Military Construction and Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization (SRM) accounts. A review of the Army National Guard's experience demonstrates the problem. During fiscal years 1995–2002, Military Construction funding for the Army National Guard was \$1.55 billion, the majority of which



<b>Reserve Component Support Assets</b>		
	Army National Guard	Army Reserve
Value of existing assets	\$29 billion	\$8 billion
Number of facilities	28,500	4,100
Total square feet	152 million	40 million
Average age	39 years	40 years
Existing backlog (to meet DoD policy)	\$7 billion	\$1.8 billion

functioning on less than 40 percent of required funding to sustain existing facilities. Moreover, they are constructing, on average, only five or six new facilities per year with only 28 percent of the required funding. Considering the advancing age of the inventory, the greater mission demands and a shifting population, it's easy to see why they are in a "facilities death spiral." The facilities are sorely in need of modernization or, in most cases, replacement. However, given the current level of Real Property Maintenance funding, the Army Reserve is unable to break free from sustainment, let alone improve their facilities.

was congressional add-ons to the President's budget request. In an average year, the Army National Guard received \$202 million for Military Construction and Transformation (Army Division Redesign), to support an inventory worth \$23 billion. Statistically, the \$202 million annually is the equivalent of nine-tenths of one percent of the asset value. It is this shortfall, over time, that has created the Army National Guard's decaying infrastructure.

For today's Army Reserve soldiers, the impact of poor facility conditions is equally acute. Overcrowded, inadequate and poorly maintained facilities seriously degrade their ability to train and sustain units. The Army Reserve has hundreds of facilities, mostly 1950s era, red-brick, flat-roofed, tired-looking structures that remain virtually the same as when they were constructed. The condition of these buildings, resulting from underfunding, tends to decay soldier morale and esprit de corps. For eight of the past ten years, the Army Reserve has been

### **What Must Be Done**

The Total Obligation Authority (TOA) must be raised so plans can be developed permitting the Army National Guard and Army Reserve units to execute their programs. Specifically:

The Army National Guard must have a fully funded sustainment program. This requires an additional \$30 million in FY 2004. Military Construction requirements are short approximately \$1 billion from the validated requirement in FY 2004. To provide adequate facilities for meeting mission requirements as well to achieve the 67-year recapitalization rate will require an additional \$371 million.

The Army Reserve FY 2004 budget request for sustainment is underfunded by \$14.2 million. The FY 2004 Military Construction Army Reserve (MCAR) budget request provides for a 152-year recapitalization rate. An additional \$70 million will be required for the Army Reserve to meet the DoD goal of 67 years.

### **Key Points**

- The Army National Guard and Army Reserve facilities are key to their readiness levels and essential to their successful mission execution.
- Currently a crumbling infrastructure exists in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve as a result of continuous underfunding.
- Correcting this problem requires an increase of the Total Obligation Authority in FY 2004 and beyond.